

South Bottoms Historic District
Worster-Gert House
711 South 1st Street
Lincoln
Lancaster County
Nebraska

HABS No. NE-43-D

HABS
NEB
SS- LINC,
62-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HABS
NEB,
55-LINC
6D-

WORSTER-GERT HOUSE

Location: 711 South 1st Street, Lincoln
Lancaster, Co., Nebraska
(South Bottoms Historic District)

Present Owner: City of Lincoln

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of
Significance: The Worster-Gert house is closely
associated with the predominant Volga-
German culture of the South Bottoms Historic
District. It is an example of one of the
most explicitly German-Russian house types
found in the district, particularly in its
four room, central chimney plan which
included the kitchen in the main body
of the house.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Original and Subsequent Owners: Lots South eighteen and
three-fourths feet of 10, North thirteen feet of 11, Eaton's
Subdivision, City of Lincoln

1888 Plat No. 434 June 8, 1888, Book 2 page 206, Lots 1-12
Annie J. Eaton & O.W. Eaton
to
the public

1907 Quitclaim Deed March 23, 1907, Book 139 page 611,
Lots (p)10-12
Nellie B. Eaton et al (Edna G.)
to
John Worster
\$1,000

1907 Deed March 23, 1907, Book 135 page 600,
Lots (p)10-12
R. G. Gable
to
Edna G. Eaton
\$950

1907 Deed March 23, 1907, Book 117 page 517,
Lots (p)10-12
Edna G. Eaton et al (Nellie Eaton & Webster Eaton)
to
John Worster
\$1

- 1907 Mortgage March 23, 1907, Book 145 page 181,
Lots (p)10-12
John Worster et al (Johannes & Anna Maria)
to
Fred W. Mumme
\$300
- 1908 Release Book 157 page 53, Lots (p)10-12
Recorded February 25, 1908
Fred W. Mumme
to
Johannes Worster et al
- 1908 Mechanics Lien March 21, 1908, Book L page 591,
Lots (p)10-12
Richard S. Young, Builder Supply Co.
to
Henry Worster
\$85.61
Account of work, labor, skill and materials done,
performed, and furnished by R. S. Young, Builder
Supply Co. under oral contract for erection of certain
dwelling house and appurtenances as the original
contractor in about said building.
(Brick, sand, stone, ash grove lime)
- 1908 Mortgage November 23, 1908, Book 164 page 406,
Lots (p)10-12
John Worster et al (Anna)
to
Pauline Meyer
\$600
- 1909 Mechanical Lien March 26, 1909, Book M page 218,
Lots (p)10-12
Dierks Lumber & Coal Co.
to
John Worster
\$36.39 (for sidewalk)
- 1910 Release Mechanical Lien Book M page 480, Lots (p)10-12
Recorded February 18, 1910
Dierks Lumber & Coal Co.
to
John Worster
- 1912 Mortgage April 8, 1912, Book 187 page 366,
Lots (p)10-12
John Worster & Wife (Anna)
to
Mollie Mohr
\$500
- 1917 Release Book 217 page 150, Lots (p)10-12

Recorded April 9, 1917
Mollie Fricke
to
John Worster et al

1917 Mortgage April 9, 1917, Book 219 page 370,
Lots (p)10-12
John Worster et al
to
Henry J. Amen
\$400

1917 Warranty Deed May 4, 1917 Book 199 page 11,
Lots (p)10- (p)11
John Worster et al (Anna)
to
Henry Gert
\$1600

1929 Mortgage July 8, 1929, Book 320 page 518,
Lots (p)10- (p)11
Henry Gert & Wife (Mary)
to
Henry J. Amen
\$1,000

1933 Mortgage January 11, 1933, Book 353 page 308,
Lots (p)10- (p)11
Henry Gert & Wife (Mary)
to
Henry J. Amen
\$1243.

1937 Assistance Lien September 1, 1937, Book 406 page 219,
Lots (p)10-12
Department of Assistance
to
Mrs. Anna Worster

1939 Assistance Lien October 31, 1939, Book 406 page 239,
Lots (p)10-12
Department of Assistance
to
Anna Worster

1939 Assistance Lien July 8, 1939, Book 406 page 240,
Lots (p)10-12
Department of Assistance
to
John Worster
Old Age Assistance

1941 Partial Release Book 416 page 16, Lots (p)10- (p)11
Recorded March 4, 1941
Lancaster County

- to
Anna Worster
- 1941 Quitclaim Deed October 11, 1941, Book 328 page 576,
 Lots (p)10- (p)11
 Henry Gerdt
 to
 Henry J. Amen
 \$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1961 Warranty Deed June 27, 1961, Book 630 page 517,
 Lots (p)10- (p)11
 Henry J. Amen & Wife (Barbara)
 to
 Henry Lehl Jr. & Wife (Louise)
 \$1,300
- 1978 Warranty Deed June 2, 1978, Book 78 page 13957,
 Lots (p)10- (p)11
 Henry Lehl Jr.
 to
 Eldon Eugene Lehl, Howard W. Lehl & Sharon Joy
 (Lehl) Harris
 \$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1985 Warranty Deed January 7, 1985, Book 85 page 543,
 Lots (p)10- (p)11
 Howard W. Lehl et al (Eldon Eugene Lehl & Sharon
 Joy (Lehl) Harris
 to
 Henry Lehl Jr.
 \$1 plus other valuable consideration
- 1986 Warranty Deed March 25, 1986, Book 86 page 25182,
 Lots (p)10- (p)11
 Henry Lehl
 to
 City of Lincoln
 \$24,00

2. Date of Erection: c.1908

3. Alterations and Additions: Major exterior modifications include the addition of a wing with basement to the rear of the main core of the house c.1947-48. The wing contains two small chambers (one currently a bathroom), a mud-room and basement stairway.

The exterior walls were originally finished with narrow clapboard siding enframed by corner pilaster boards, cornice and water table. Later the exterior wall surfaces and trim details were sheathed with asphalt composition siding. Recently the exterior walls have been covered with metal siding and the front porch has been extensively remodeled.

Interior wall finishes and trim have been altered.

4. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Structure: John Worster purchased the property in 1907 and erected the house in its present location the following year. Both Mr. and Mrs. Worster had immigrated from Balzer, Russia in 1904. He was a carpenter and possibly built the house himself. They resided in the house from 1908 to 1917.

Henry Gert lived in the house from 1917 until 1941. Thereafter Henry L. Lehl Jr. and his family rented the property and later bought it in 1961, living there until 1986. Mr. Lehl was a laborer for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. In 1951 he opened a bait shop in the back yard and later erected several small outbuildings.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. Architectural Interest and Merit: The Worster-Gert house belongs to a family of German-Russian house types which displays the most explicit of Old World architectural characteristics including a rectangular plan shape with its narrow dimension facing the street and the incorporation of the kitchen into the main body of the house. This family of types includes the largest number (59%) of houses in the South Bottoms Historic District.

2. Condition of the Fabric: Fair (to be demolished).

3. Summary Description: The Worster-Gert house is a one-story rectangular mass with attic measuring approximately seven meters by eight meters covered with a front facing gable roof. Extending from the rear (west) of the core is a wing covered with a hipped roof. The entire house rests on a raised foundation.

4. Description of Exterior: The main body of the house is oriented longitudinally, the shorter dimension forming the front (east) facade. This facade is a nearly symmetrical three bay composition with central door. The gable is pierced by a large attic window and finished with a return cornice. The main facade is enlivened by a hip-roofed front porch.

Exterior walls are sheathed with metal siding. Window and door openings are enframed with plain wood trim. Windows are double-hung single pane wood sash except for the attic window which is four-over-four.

Structurally, the house is of simple wood frame construction. Foundations are concrete masonry units; rock-faced around the exposed perimeter of the core and smooth-faced around the rear wing.

5. Description of Interior: A room height basement exists beneath both the core and rear wing. The main level of the core

is basically a simple four room plan arranged in two tiers. A wide tier along the south accommodates the front parlor and kitchen. Two bedrooms comprise the narrow tier along the north. The exterior and interior walls of the wing extending from the rear (west) align precisely with those of the core. A large mud-room and stairway to the basement are located on the south, a bedroom and bathroom on the north. Regular door openings provide access between all rooms.

Original interior finishes consist of lath and plaster walls which have been covered with plywood panelling. Woodwork is plain and of contemporary configuration (none of the original woodwork remains).

6. Orientation, Setting and Outbuildings: The house is located in the northwest portion of the South Bottoms Historic District and faces east on South 1st Street. The property is bounded by the Henry Scharton house (documentation included) on the north, a vacant lot on the west and the Eaton-Worster house (documentation included) on the south.

Two outbuildings, a frame shed and frame coop, are located at the rear of the property.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Interview:

Lehl, Henry (1942-1986 at 711 South First), Lincoln, Nebraska. Personal interview with Anne Schafer, August 1986.

Records:

Building Permits, Building Permits and Inspections Administration, City of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Lancaster County Assessment Books and Tax Lists 1905-1929, County Assessor's Office, Lincoln, Nebraska and State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society.

Murphy, Dave and Kathleen Fimple, "South Bottoms Historic District, Lincoln, Nebraska," National Register of Historic Places - Inventory Nomination Form. Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1986.

Polk's Lincoln City Directory, Lincoln, Nebraska: Polk - McAvoy, 1908 - .

Records of Deeds, Clerk of the County Court, Lancaster County, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Lincoln, Nebraska. New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, 1903, 1927.

US Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29 (Lancaster County), 624, Roll B49-B50. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910.

Williams, Hattie Plum and Jacob J. Stroh, "Census of the German-Russian Population, Lincoln, Nebraska". State Archives, Nebraska State Historical Society, Micro.#7369.

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